

Good evening, My name is Alcira Marin Kane. I work at Neighborhood Legal Services. As you may know, Legal Services provides civil legal advice and direct representation to income eligible clients, elder and disabled individuals. I have been working for Legal Services and in this community for over thirty years.

I am here today because I am concerned that if we do not raise issues now about the sale of Holy Family and the other five Caritas Hospitals, at this public hearing, the community may go without some health services or miss opportunities implement or expand needed programs. I am rather surprised that so few people know about the sale of the Hospital. It has been a rather quiet process. As far as I know, the posting of the public hearing was done only on Saturday, June 19, 2010 at the Lawrence Eagle Tribune, an English newspaper. I do not know of any notification to the public in any of the other Spanish newspapers or the radio

I reviewed some of the paperwork forming part of the transaction. I did not see any stated commitment to embrace or address the needs of this community. The lack of open forums, community input and change in status from not for profit to for profit hospital is of great concern to us.

Some questions for the panel: What will be the input if any, the community will have after the hospital is sold to a corporation whose directive is to take care of the bottom line, and the bottom line is to maximize lprofit. Also, if the sale of this hospital has not been publicized appropriately, and the process has been less than desirable, what is the likelihood that the community would have any input in the future of the hospital?

Let me express some of the needs the hospital could address and or improve: Need for more qualified bilingual services in most departments; Community Education for chronic diseases, such as obesity, diabetes, and asthma; more after care survivors services, specially for the Spanish speaking population; more services for the under insured population.; Holy Family is not certified as a Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner facility (SANE) and therefore the victims can not properly pursue their case. Special "filling the gap" measures, for patients waiting for their health coverage to start and not having enough money to buy their medications. Also, Holy Family could join the Lawrence General Hospital and not only complement each others programs, but also connect to the community by bringing the hospital to the community, by using health fairs, Blood drives, Mammography Vans, use the Eye Mobile, Cancer awareness, etc. A very important component of this hearing is to look at the mental health services Holy Family has been providing and really address unmet needs from this very under served and vulnerable population.

There are many more questions to address than there is time to address them here, so in an effort not to speak for too long, I will be submitting additional written testimony. I ask you to please take into consideration the needs and concerns of this community and really become its advocate. Their health care services or lack of it is greatly in your hands. Hopefully moving forward through this process with Holy Family and the community as partners, together we could provide, improve and become the best health care services in the Greater Lawrence community. Thank you for your time and attention.

*& Merrimack Valley*